

**Marine Safety Office Houston-Galveston  
Marine Safety Unit Galveston  
Vessel Traffic Service Houston-Galveston**

**Marine Safety Information Bulletin**

**12-04**

**June 16, 2004**

**HEAVY WEATHER SAFETY PLANNING  
FOR ALL VESSELS**

The Captain of the Port Houston-Galveston urges all vessel owners and operators to identify safe areas where vessels may be moored or anchored during tropical storms and hurricanes to ensure mariner safety.

In July 2003 Tropical Storm Claudette surprised many mariners along the Gulf Coast from Palacios, Texas to New Iberia, Louisiana while attempting to make last minute efforts to evade the approaching storm and the 80 mile-per-hour winds.

To ensure the safety of your vessel and crew, now is the time to plan. Survey places to moor or anchor to safely ride out a tropical storm or hurricane, and make available the necessary heavy weather mooring gear.

A checklist entitled Severe Weather Procedures For the Maritime Industry provides expected actions on the part of facilities and vessels to prepare the port in advance of the arrival of gale force winds from a hurricane or tropical storm. It is available at the following web site:

<http://www.uscg.mil/msohoustongalveston/portinformation/severeweath.html>

Although the safety of your crew and your vessel is of the utmost importance, it is necessary to emphasize that existing security zones established by the Captain of the Port will remain in force during severe weather. Vessels should plan in advance to seek shelter outside these zones. Unauthorized vessels moored within a security zone may be subject to penalty, post storm operational controls, and/or security boarding as necessary to ensure security of the port. A description of the established security zones within the Ports of Houston, Galveston, Texas City and Freeport is available at the following web address:

[http://www.uscg.mil/d8/vts/houston-galveston/DownloadsPage\\_files/SecurityZones.pdf](http://www.uscg.mil/d8/vts/houston-galveston/DownloadsPage_files/SecurityZones.pdf)

Mariners are reminded that effective July 1, 2004 all commercial facilities (whether or not they are located in a security zone) are required, by law, to have security procedures in place for the current maritime security threat level. By regulation, vessels intending to moor at the facility must have an agreed upon security arrangement between the vessel and the facility prior to the vessel mooring there. All vessel owners intending to moor one of their vessels at such a facility during heavy weather conditions should coordinate their plans with the owner of the facility.

Please refer any further questions or concerns to MSO Houston-Galveston at (713) 671-5133, or MSU Galveston at (409) 682-1264.



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Captain of the Port